

MILE END CROSSING TO REMAIN OPEN IF COMMUNITY STAYS SAFE

Following feedback from the community and meetings with a nominated community group, the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) has postponed its plans to temporarily close the Mile End pedestrian crossing on 15 February 2016.

While the closure was **only ever intended to be temporary** we appreciate that residents would be without access via this crossing for a considerable period until Torrens Junction works eliminated the problem.

Our decision to close the crossing until that time was driven by our desire to eliminate the risk of someone being injured or killed by a freight train. Based on what we've heard from the community we recognise the need to balance that safety risk with the convenience and access needs of the people that use it.

Bakewell street underpass remains the safest option for people walking to the Mile End station or the parklands and city, but we acknowledge for a range of reasons that route doesn't suit everyone.

We thank residents for taking the time to provide feedback about the temporary closure and their suggestions for alternatives to deal with the issue of people using the crossing while it's blocked by a freight train.

As a result, we will be trialling a number of the ideas provided, including:

- Keeping the crossing open, contingent on ongoing safe behaviour
- Installing permanent safety signage explaining the dangers
- Monitoring the site with random CCTV surveillance.

The CCTV will be reviewed regularly to identify any cases where people are using the crossing while it is blocked by a freight train. We will share these results with the nominated community group and the crossing will remain open if unsafe use is witnessed at less than 10 per cent of train blockages over the period recorded (over rolling 3 month periods).

We hope that the increased awareness of the dangers will encourage people to use the crossing safely or use the Bakewell Street underpass. If that continues then then we can keep the crossing open.

We will provide advice to the 'Residents opposed to Mile End pedestrian crossing closure' community group to alert residents about any concerning safety trends or incidents at the crossing so they can be dealt with.

However, if high levels of unsafe use are recorded (i.e. at a rate higher than 10 per cent for every blockage) ARTC reserves the right to close the crossing. We would need to act quickly – but we would alert residents via the community group and other means as soon as possible. Once Torrens Junction works were completed we would re-open the crossing.

We want to be upfront with residents so we do need to alert you to the possibility that the crossing may need to be closed for periods during the construction phase of the Torrens Junction project. This might be to allow for specific works to take place or it might be because temporary changes to train running due to construction increase the frequency of trains blocking the crossing. Again this would only be temporary, but at this stage the only commitment we can make is that we will be open and advise residents if that need arises.

The responsibility now lies with the community to ensure safe use of the crossing continues so we can avoid any closure. We hope that this can be a positive example of the community and rail cooperating to reduce the risk of harm, while at the same time maintaining public access.

We would like to thank the community again for its feedback and trust that we can keep the crossing safe (and open) for the months and years ahead.

Sincerely

ARTC